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TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [TW](#)
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: PRESIDENT CHEN SHUI-BIAN

Summary: Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies focused their coverage December 29 on the third session of trial hearings in the Presidential Office Allowance for State Affairs case today and on the record-high lottery draw Thursday evening, December 28. The pro-status quo "China Times" ran a news story on page eight with the headline "United States: Bian Had Better Not 'Create Surprises' in His New Year's Day [Address] Any More." In terms of editorials and commentaries, an editorial in the limited-circulation, conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" discussed the trial in the Presidential Office Allowance for State Affairs case and President Chen Shui-bian's future. The article said "To repay the faithful backing given by 'deep green' followers, President Chen is expected and obliged to tilt further, during the remainder of his tenure, toward the ideology of Taiwan independence on such issues as the proclamation of a 'second republic' with the adoption of a new constitution." End summary.

"President Chen May Become More Radical"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (12/29):

"... Numerous instances have proven that Chen can rely on the determined support of those 'deep green' people, although they are in a minority, to weather one political storm after another. In terms of political effectiveness, their numerical disadvantage has been more than made up for by their aggressiveness and individual combat capability. Look at the aggressive performance of the lawyers for the defendants during the trial sessions [i.e. of the Presidential Office Allowance for State Affairs case], who repeatedly challenged the prosecutors and judges. Indeed, such a phenomenon of defiance of the judicial authority is rarely seen in any modern democracy. In doing so, the legal team hired by the accused attempted to overpower the court psychologically.

"To repay the faithful backing given by 'deep green' followers, President Chen is expected and obliged to tilt further, during the remainder of his tenure, toward the ideology of Taiwan independence on such issues as the proclamation of a 'second republic' with the adoption of a new constitution. Many have suggested that once the DPP nominates its presidential candidate for the 2008 elections, the president will lose his effective control of party and government affairs and become a lame-duck head of state, but this may not necessarily be the case as long as he continues to be firmly supported by the 'deep-green' voters, who form the backbone of the DPP electorate. In other words, touted as the 'son of Taiwan,' Chen will be able to control the DPP and the government apparatus through exercising his influence on the 'deep-green' constituency. How great this influence will be and for how long depends on how much he has done to satisfy the demands of these people.

"Without having to worry about any more elections, Chen may be tempted to run high risks in policy making, regardless of domestic

public opinion and reactions from the United States, for personal benefit rather than in the national interest. Apparently, what concerns Chen most now is whether he can serve out his second term and whether he can avoid being prosecuted for corruption after he steps down. The continued strong support of hardcore 'deep-green' people will play a crucial role in President Chen's calculations. He needs to redouble his efforts to capture the hearts of the ardent advocates of the Taiwan independence movement for self-protection."

WANG